

# ECOD NEWS

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ERIE COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE DISABLED

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Habitat for Humanity Buffalo (HFHB) is the local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International. HFHB uses resources from every level of the community giving all involved, including homeowners, the opportunity to share with others. House recipients help build more houses by making monthly mortgage payments at zero interest which go back into the building fund. Thus, donated dollars are used many times over. Volunteers come from a variety of places, including church, civic, business and youth groups. By working together, they turn the dream of adequate housing for all people into reality.

Any family that could not obtain a conventional mortgage but can afford low cost housing is eligible for the program. The partner families must contribute to their own success by doing 500 hours of sweat equity on their own or other Habitat houses.

HFHB builds in the City of Buffalo and occasionally in the City of Lackawanna. Established in 1985, HFHB has now built or rehabbed 185 houses, impacting 754 people, including 493 children.

Habitat Buffalo also has a ReStore at 501 Amherst St. in Buffalo. The ReStore is a retail outlet that sells new and gently used goods to benefit HFHB. The ReStore specializes in household items such as appliances, furniture, building materials and house wares. It relays mainly on donations from individuals, contractors and building suppliers. The ReStore is open Wednesday through Saturday from 9-4 and Sunday from noon to 4. For more information call 716-204-0740, or visit our website at [www.habitatbuffalo.org](http://www.habitatbuffalo.org).



## Belmont Housing Resources for WNY Offers People with Disabilities Access to a WIDE Range of Options for Living Comfortably and Affordably

As part of its commitment to expanding the availability of quality affordable housing for individuals, families and seniors, non-profit Belmont Housing Resources for WNY manages 14 residential properties in communities throughout Western New York, all of which enthusiastically welcome people with disabilities.

At two of these properties – 24-unit Niagara Village (731-2965) in North Tonawanda and 11-unit Ellicott Place (881-4904) in Central Buffalo – all the apartments are specifically designed to provide enhanced accessibility and livability for persons with disability-based needs and are made available exclusively to persons with disabilities. To be eligible, families must meet income requirements and include either a head of household or a spouse who has a disability.

Additionally, a number of Belmont properties have handicapped-accessible apartments designated to be rented to persons with disabilities, including six at the 60-unit Artspace Buffalo Lofts (887-2963) in Midtown Buffalo and 10 at the 64-unit Town Homes at Shawnee Landing (694-3105) in Wheatfield.

With its other residential properties, including the Islandview Apartments (773-2416) on Grand Island; the Townview Apartments (684-3509) and Woodland Place (668-9534) in Lancaster; Southwind Landing (206-0281) in Cheektowaga; Seneca Woods (825-7200) in West Seneca and the Herbert Star Apartments (792-7585) in Brocton; Belmont collectively provides WNY with more than 470 handicapped-accessible or adaptable units of comfortable, attractive, affordable housing.

More details about Belmont Housing Resources for WNY's properties and programs are available at any of the organization's three conveniently-located offices, at 1195 Main Street in Buffalo, 174 Main Street in Hamburg and 33 Spruce Street in North Tonawanda, by visiting its website at [www.belmontshelter.org](http://www.belmontshelter.org), or by calling 884-7791/TDD 711 for the hearing impaired.

## Erie County NY Connects – A Resource for All

Long term care covers a variety of health and other services needed when you have a long term illness or disability causing you to need help with everyday activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing, moving from bed to chair, toileting, or eating. Because of injury, disease or age, people of any age may need some type of long term care services during their lifetime. **Erie County NY Connects** offers information about long term care, with the goal of helping you identify the best available care options, whether that means staying at home with the right mix of services or finding a place where your needs, or those of your loved one, can be met.

The professionals are experienced in dealing with the details of individual situations, some of which perhaps sound familiar: "My 10 year old autistic son can be a danger to himself and can't be left alone after school. If I pay my neighbor for taking care of him between school and the time we get home from work, can we receive a tax savings or have it funded?" or "My daughter now requires a wheelchair - is there any help paying for a wheelchair ramp to be built at our home?" and "My brother is 50 years old, challenged with illness and disability. Mom took care of him his whole life, but she recently died and I took him in, but I can't manage any longer! Who do I call for help?" or "I relocated out of the area and Dad now lives alone –after visiting him over the holidays I have concerns as he seems to be declining."

There are many benefits to planning ahead, and Erie County NY Connects can help.

Planning ahead for long term care:

- allows you to have more control over your future;
- helps you understand what service options are available in your community;
- teaches you about what services cost;
- means less emotional and financial stress on you / your family at a time of crisis;
- ensures greater choices should you need care.

**Erie County NY Connects** is the place to start for locating critically important information tailored to each individual's situation. In all cases, the information offered is:

- Free of charge
- For all ages, offering unbiased and impartial information about programs, services, insurance, caregiver support, financial benefits and other items crucial for people who need long term care assistance.
- A starting point for exploring options and resources regarding source of payment for services, whether private-pay, New York State programs, Medicaid, or Medicare.
- Geared toward and focused on each individual's personal situation.

To contact **Erie County NY Connects**, call **(716) 858-8526**, e-mail [nyconnects@erie.gov](mailto:nyconnects@erie.gov), or find more information at [www.erie.gov/nyconnects](http://www.erie.gov/nyconnects)

**SafeLink**  
WIRELESS



Safe-Link Wireless was created by TracFone Wireless, Inc., and was recently approved to offer Lifeline by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Safe-Link Wireless was created to provide telephone service that is affordable for people with low-incomes. This service is provided in New York, which is one of seven states in the country that is providing the service.

For eligible people, free wireless handsets are provided, along with unlimited 911 access. Also, 68 minutes of free talk time a month for 1 year is provided. Eligible customers will also have access to voicemail, text, web access, 3-way calling, call waiting, and caller ID.

For more information on eligibility and applications or any questions, please call 1-800-977-3768, or visit the website at [www.SafelinkWireless.com](http://www.SafelinkWireless.com).



## Radon Awareness Program

### *What is Radon?*

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas found in soil, rock, and water which gets into the air that we breathe. Studies have shown that long term exposure to high levels of radon gas may be dangerous to your health.

### *Why should Radon be tested?*

Radon is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas that can only be detected by testing for it.

### *How is Radon tested?*

Testing for radon is simple and safe. A small charcoal packet is placed on each ground floor or basement in the residence and is left there for 3 to 7 days.

The resident must keep all windows and doors shut during the testing period (except for normal entering and exiting) for the test to be accurate. Also, the resident must not touch or move the testing kit.

### *Where can more information about Radon or testing kits be found?*

Test kits are available on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor, room 1077 of the Rath building in downtown Buffalo for \$8.00 each.

For any questions, please contact: The Erie County Indoor Air Quality Hotline at (716)858-2791 or the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning at (716)858-6370. A website is also available at:

[www.erie.gov/environment/compliance/radon program.asp](http://www.erie.gov/environment/compliance/radon program.asp).

*The Erie County Office for the Disabled makes no endorsement of products or programs described.  
This publication is for informational purposes only.*

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED